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¶ 1

1. A method comprising:  
2. executing a first basic input/output system  
3. module; and  
4. dynamically linking to a second basic  
5. input/output system module.
  
1. 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
2. storing said first module of a basic input/output  
3. system for a processor-based system on a first storage  
4. device prior to execution;  
5. storing said second module of the basic  
6. input/output system on a second storage device prior to  
7. execution; and  
8. enabling said second module to be executed  
9. conditionally depending on a state of said processor-based  
10. system.
  
1. 3. The method of claim 2 wherein storing said second  
2. module includes storing said second module in a storage  
3. associated with a network server accessible to said  
4. processor-based system over a network.
  
1. 4. The method of claim 1 further including detecting  
2. said system state during the boot sequence.

1           5. The method of claim 4 including detecting whether  
2 or not the system is connected to a network during the boot  
3 operation.

1           6. The method of claim 1 including dynamically  
2 linking to one of a plurality of modules, and exporting an  
3 offset to an entry point in one module to another module.

1           7. The method of claim 6 including storing a  
2 secondary entry point in a module to locate a function  
3 within the module.

1           8. The method of claim 7 including developing a  
2 segment address for said second module at run time.

1           9. The method of claim 8 including providing a  
2 descriptor table which indicates a segment address for said  
3 second module.

1           10. An article comprising a medium for storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to:  
3           execute a first basic input/output system module; and  
4           dynamically link to a second basic input/output system  
5 module.

1           11. The article of claim 10 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to:  
3           access said first module of a basic input/output  
4 system on a first storage device;  
5           access said second module of the basic  
6 input/output system on a second storage device; and  
7           execute said second module conditionally  
8 depending on the state of said processor-based system.

1           12. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to access  
3 said second module in a storage associated with a network  
4 server accessible to said processor-based system over a  
5 network.

1           13. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to execute  
3 said second module conditionally depending on whether or  
4 not the processor-based system is coupled to a network.

1           14. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to  
3 selectively access either a first module setting forth a  
4 first authentication protocol in a first storage device or  
5 a second module setting forth a second authentication  
6 protocol in a second storage device.

1           15. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to  
3 dynamically link said first and second modules.

1           16. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to detect  
3 said system state during the boot sequence.

1           17. The article of claim 16 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to detect  
3 whether the system is connected to a network during the  
4 boot operation.

1           18. The article of claim 11 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to  
3 dynamically link to one of a plurality of modules using  
4 offsets to entry points in said modules.

1           19. The article of claim 18 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to store a  
3 secondary entry point in a module to locate a function  
4 within the module.

1           20. The article of claim 19 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to develop  
3 a segment address for said second module at run time.

1           21. The article of claim 20 further storing  
2 instructions that cause a processor-based system to provide  
3 a descriptor table which identifies the segment address for  
4 said second module.

1           22. A processor-based system comprising:  
2            a processor;  
3            a first basic input/output system module  
4 executable by said processor; and  
            a second basic input/output system module  
executable by said processor, said second module being  
dynamically linked to said first module.

1           23. The system of claim 22 including a detector that  
2 detects a system state to determine whether said processor  
3 executes said second module.

1           24. The system of claim 22 including a first storage  
2 for said first module and a second storage for said second  
3 module, said second storage being coupled to said  
4 processor-based system over a network.

1           25. The system of claim 24 wherein said detector  
2 detects information about network access.

1           26. The system of claim 25 wherein said first and  
2 second modules include different authentication protocols.

1           27. The system of claim 26 wherein said processor  
2 executes said basic input/output system module on said  
3 second storage to implement a network authentication  
4 protocol.

1           28. The system of claim 22 wherein said first module  
2 dynamically links to said second module, using an offset  
3 exported from said second module.

1           29. The system of claim 28 wherein said first module  
2 uses a secondary entry point to locate a function in said  
3 second module.

1           30. The system of claim 22 wherein said processor  
2 provides a descriptor table which includes a segment  
3 address for said second module.